# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# COAL
# LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2437
ANSWERED ON:07.08.2001
FIRE ACCIDENT IN UNDERGROUND COAL MINES
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**Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:**

(a): whether the Government are aware that the gas leakage and underground coal mine fires have been spreading in the country at various coal mines;

(b): if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c): the steps taken or proposed to be taken to extinguish the fire;

(d): whether the management of some coal mines have issued notice to several families in villages to vacate their houses due to underground fire;

(e): if so, the facts thereof;

(f): whether the various technologies being adopted by the Government to check such fires have proved ineffective;
(g): if so, whether the Government propose to seek help from the foreign countries in this regard; and
(h): if so, the details thereof?

## Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR COAL (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN)

(a) & (b): Certain coal seams have inherent property of spontaneous heating. If not tackled in the initial stages. This may lead to open fire. Similarly, gases are also associated in coal mines. Leakage of gas from sealed off areas and otherwise i s also a normal phenomenon which is tackled during the course of mining. Jharia coalfield of BCCL has large fire areas.Spreading of fire in BCCL has been retarded but not to the desired extent.

(c): The following steps are taken to extinguish the fire depending upon the conditions;

1. Quenching of spot fire and mining out the quenched coal.

2. Blanketing the surface and surface sealing for filling of cracks.

3. Sand flushing

4. Pumping inert gas into the active fire zone from surface to underground via boreholes.

5. Trenching
6. Water pooling

7 Prompt sealing of the effected panel

8. Plastering and/or coating with sealant of stopping.

9. Equipping fire stations with fire fighting equipments such as water hoses, incombustible dust, sand and portable fire extinguishers.
10. Constructing masonry stopping with the help of rescue personnel to stop supply of air to the fire zone .

(d) & (e): The management of BCCL has issued noticesto the families from time to time residing in the endangered localities already affected/likely to be affected by underground fire and gas leakage, about the imminent threat to their lives and property and need to vacate these areas. District authorities have also been kept apprised from time to time.

(f): Various technologies being adopted are found to be effective. However, due to enormity of the problem the fire in BCCL could not be controlled fully.

(g) & (h): Not applicable in view of (f) above.